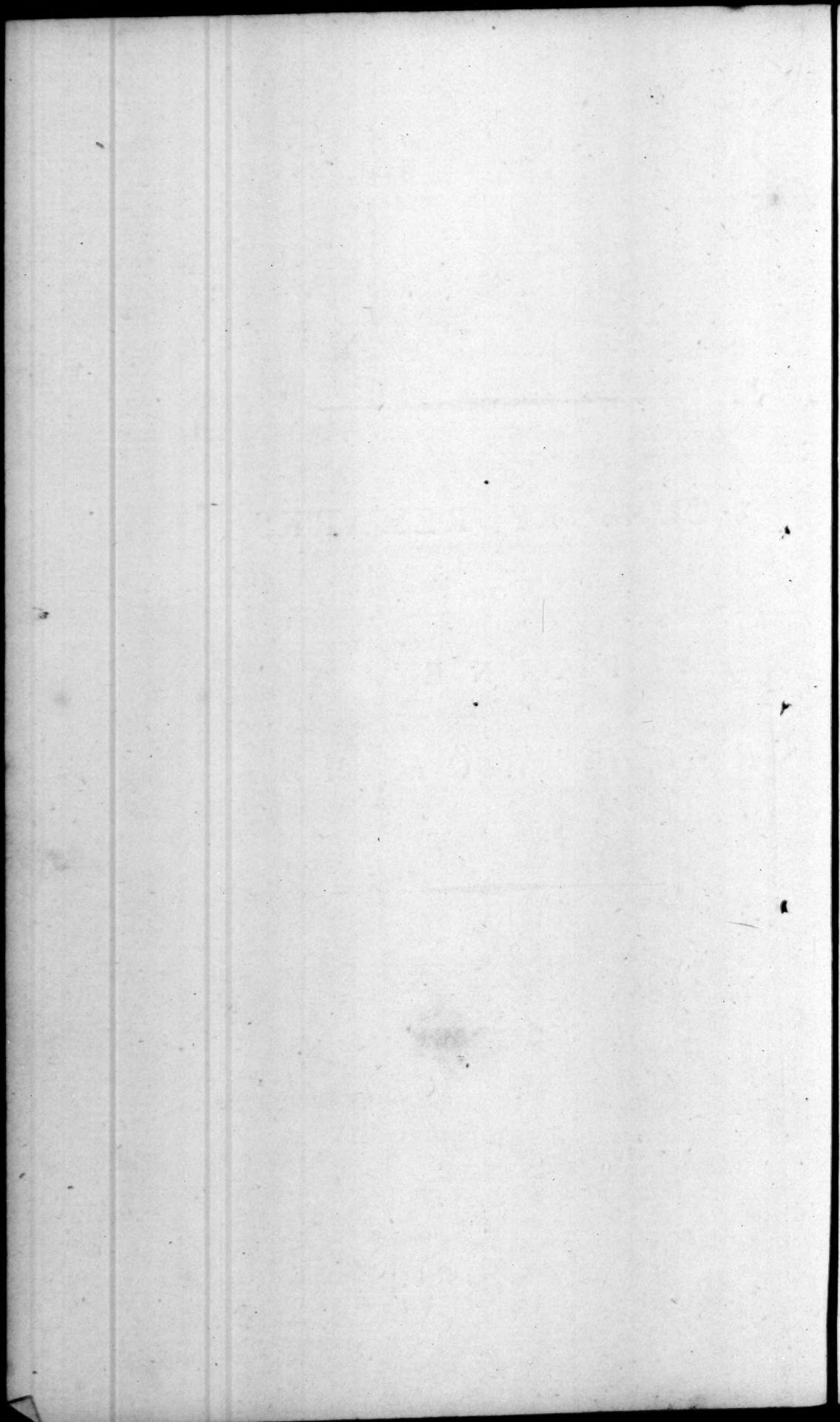

CURSORY REMARKS
ON
P A I N E ' S
R I G H T S O F M A N.

[PRICE SIXPENCE.]



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CURSORY REMARKS

ON
P A I N E ' S
R I G H T S O F M A N.

" Order is Heav'n's first Law."

POPE.

" We cannot do without Forms of Government, on
" Account of the ambitious, the wicked, the foolish Mem-
" bers of Society.

Dr. WENDERBORN.

London:

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ALL THE BOOKSELLERS.

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T O

Sir BROOK BOOTHBY, Bart.

THESE REMARKS

ARE,

WITH THE MOST PROFOUND RESPECT,

INSCRIBED,

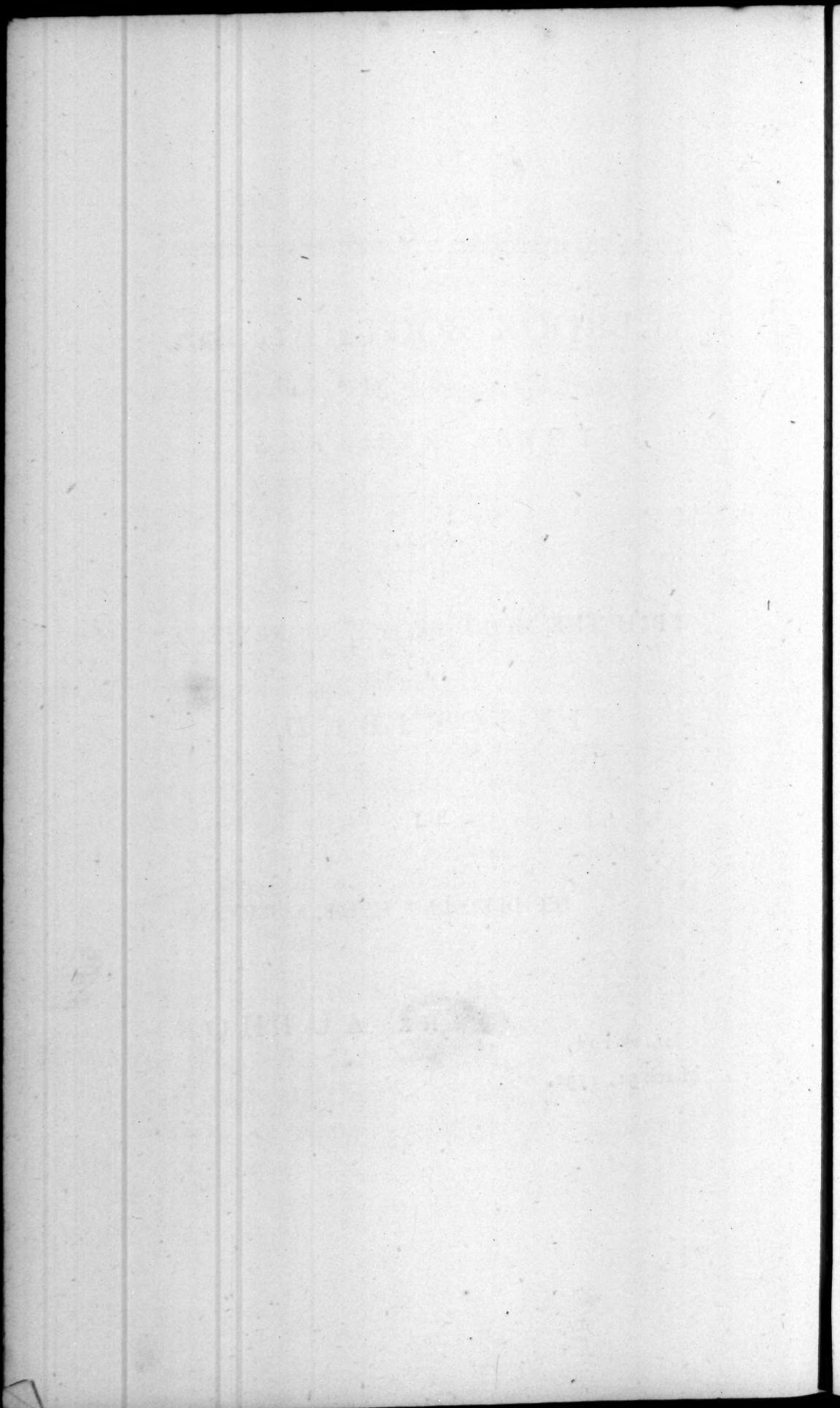
BY

HIS OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR,

ISLINGTON,

March 31, 1792.



CURSORY REMARKS, &c.

THE popularity Mr. Paine's celebrated Treatise has gained, the pompous manner in which it was introduced to the notice of the public, the bold and paradoxical way in which he has treated his subject, have justly excited the public attention. Novelty has always attractions; new fangled systems, and new modelled theories, however impracticable and absurd they may be, will be sure to have admirers.

This has been verified with respect to Paine's Pamphlet; had the Secretary to the American congress been less paradoxical in his reasoning; had he not embellished his performance with invectives against the British constitution,

constitution, the Rights of Man would have remained unnoticed and sunk into oblivion. But the secret enemies of our glorious constitution were delighted to find a performance, which might justly be styled, after their own hearts, " quite congenial to their own sentiments."

What a dust I make, said the fly, when perched on the chariot wheel. What a dust will I raise, said Secretary Paine, when I shall introduce to the world my Rights of Man!!! The pillars of the British constitution will totter and shake, and I shall be esteemed the oracle of wisdom!!!

To me will men resort to have their just rights ascertained—for never were the Rights of Man so fully and amply illustrated. As for Locke and Montesquieu, they undoubtedly had some faint glimmerings of light on this important subject; "but to compare their writings to mine, is equally absurd, as to compare the dim light of a taper—to the sun shining in its meridian splendor!!!"—I have frequently been in company where the question has been put to me, "Have you read Mr. Paine's Book? Is it not an astonishing performance?"

" performance?" And before I could reply, his sanguine admirers pronounced it to be unanswerable.

I should be extremely concerned if such principles, such wild principles, so subversive of all subordination and government, and so inimical to true liberty; I say, I should be sorry if such principles would bear the test of a free and impartial examination. Mr. Paine's principles will not stand the trial, but like the apples of Sodom—the slightest touch proves destructive.

That a professed Republican should meet with such encouragement in his wild reveries, is wonderful; can a true Briton bear with a man who sneers at the Glorious Revolution in 1688? an event dear to every Englishman. Who vilifies the character of our illustrious Deliverer from Popery and Despotism, William III. who ridicules the exaltation of the noble house of Brunswick, to the British throne; who treats with indignant contempt, the crowned heads of Europe. So far is such language as this (and this is the language of Mr. Paine's Treatise) from delineating the Rights of Man,

B that

that it is an infringement of his rights,—an insult to the British nation.

I have often discoursed with the disciples of this modern philosopher (a philosopher compared with whom, even PLATO himself, shrinks into nothing ; and were that great philosopher again to visit our world, he would with joy consign his laborious treatise of republics to the flames, and place his wreath of laurel on the head of PAINÉ). I have desired to have a clear and definite elucidation of the Rights of Man ; I could never obtain a decisive answer ; they appeared to be lost in the wild theories of their master ; they have evaded the question ; and thus have given sufficient proof on what a sandy foundation their superstructure was built ! Being continually referred to Mr. PAINÉ's book for complete answers to my queries ; I took the work in hand, and read it over with care and attention, and great was my surprise, to find so little to the purpose, where the author might have said many things, which would have proved useful and beneficial.

I was shocked to find the inflammatory language of sedition spread through the whole of

this performance ; to make the happy inhabitants of our isle, disgusted and discontented with their state and condition.

The artful sophisms might have been excused, but the malicious invectives, the insidious reflections, the *****. But I have said sufficient, let me draw the veil of candour over the rest,

The levelling principles, which are the prominent features of Paine's production, are not of a very modern date. History presents us with several illustrious characters, who may vie with Mr. Paine, as vindicators of the Rights of Men. The records of my country recall to my memory a very important period, when some celebrated heroes, who should be had in everlasting remembrance, performed some noble exploits. What injustice should I do to thy memory, O WAT TYLER ! and thou no less illustrious JACK STRAW ! were I to neglect to record your noble and intrepid acts in defence of the Rights of Man ! Yes, ye illustrious chiefs, ye are worthy of all the renown, and all the praise ye have so justly acquired. To complete the triumvirate, let me add the renowned Parson BALL (a gentleman

man for whose memory I am certain Mr. PAINE has a great regard. This son of the church beat the pulpit drum ecclesiastic ; his discourses were warm and animated ; and his text the following beautiful and elegant lines. They have all the sublimity of PINDAR, and the majestic pathos of VIRGIL !!

" When ADAM delv'd, and EVE did span,
" Pray who was then a Gentleman ?"

Ay ! who indeed ? Why nobody. Mr. PAINE has made a most excellent commentary upon these words. The names of these three illustrious defenders of the faith, are as familiar to him, as those of MUNNY BEGUM and CHEIT SING AVE to Mr. HASTINGS. But to proceed, I must inform my readers what were the consequences of Parson BALL's harangues, his hearers all thought themselves gentlemen, real gentlemen, equal to any in the land. Anon they sally forth, and commit the most daring depredations ; confign houses to the flames ; open the doors of the prisons ; burn and pillage monasteries ; poor SIMON SUDBERRY, Archbishop of Canterbury, they behead ! He was not a gentleman ! From such men, from such principles, from such practices, may we adopt the

the language of our excellent liturgy, and say, “ Good Lord deliver us ! ” Many of my readers will recall to their memory a dire event, still recent to their minds. When the metropolis of this empire was on the brink of ruin—when every man did that which was right in his own eyes—when all were on a level—when Mr. P A I N E ’ s theory was exhibited in practice—when peers and prelates were insulted by tinkers and blacksmiths ; and every thing was anarchy and confusion :—Such are the direful consequences of the levelling principles !

Supposing such a system of equalization to take place, what wonderful changes should we behold. The venerable Lord T H U R L O W , who so nobly fills the woolfack in the House of Peers, we might perchance see ascending a ladder with a hod of mortar on his shoulder ; the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be seen driving pigs to market ; and the Bishop of Durham, crying hot mutton pies ! These would be glorious times, would they not Mr. P A I N E ? Nature would be restored to its primæval simplicity, and the world regenerated. The late revolution in France, is a darling theme, which Mr. P A I N E is always happy to introduce, whether

ther the subject leads to it, or not ; but I ask, What has the French revolution to do with this nation, unless the outrages committed in France are held up to view, as proper models for our imitation ? As men, and as sons of liberty, we ought to rejoice, that the powers of darkness are vanquished, and despotism and tyranny are abolished in a country where they had long reigned.

Such a resolution is worthy of our admiration, and we may rejoice that the walls of the Bastile have been demolished, and the innocent victims of arbitrary power, snatched from the jaws of destruction. But to propose this revolution as Mr. PAINE has done, for the imitation of those countries where despotism and tyranny are not known, is acting an insidious part. Britain is the happiest country in the world ; it has always been esteemed so, until such writers as the author of the Rights of Man, endeavoured to beguile the unwary with the very poison of asps, and to sow the seeds of discontent. Whither, oh whither can we go, to search for happiness, if not in our own country ?

Oh

Oh Britain ! Britain ! the wonder and admiration of Europe, enriched with every blessing ! Thou privileged spot, of nature's vast domains, whose sons are valiant and brave, and whose daughters like polished stones, add strength and beauty to the state. May thy inhabitants ever be sensible of the goodness of Divine Providence, in constituting them members of thee !

Mr. PAINE has through the whole of his first and second part, painted the British constitution in the blackest colours. This eagle-eyed observer, discovers at once that it is all folly and absurdity, and thus pays our venerable forefathers an undeniable compliment of being all fools. And, indeed, when I consider the wonderful abilities of Mr. PAINE ; his acute observations on political subjects ; his abilities as a financier ; I must acknowledge he stands unequalled. He is a *rara avis*—the *phœnix* of the age—compared with whom Mr. PITT is a mere baby—King, Lords, and Commons, are the three grand branches of the British constitution, with all of whom Mr. PAINE quarrels. As for a monarch, he asserts there is no necessity, he is a mere goose, or gander ; that there should be a House of Peers, he thinks detestable ;

detestable ; not to be allowed on any consideration. It is them, he says, who burden the country, and yet free themselves from bearing a part. The House of Commons, he acknowledges, if the representation was equal, to be salutary and useful ; and here, I must affirm, that I agree with Mr. PAINE. If there was a more equal representation in parliament, if rotten boroughs were excluded from sending members, certainly it would be a desirable and excellent regulation. But let us not find fault with the whole of the constitution for a few defects, this is acting unfairly ; besides let it be remembered, that if a majority in favour of the crown is generally to be found in the House of Commons, it is the fault of the people, not of his majesty's ministers. Let the people be careful who they elect, let them examine whether they are men of probity and rectitude, whether they understand the British constitution ; if they answer these qualifications, they are worthy of being elected, but not else. But how is it generally at elections ? Why, people are indifferent who they elect, any man that will open houses for them, where they may intoxicate themselves free of expence ; any man who will treat them with flowing bowls and good cheer, he is the man ; he is the lad
for

for parliament; and, perhaps, understands as much about his duty as a member of the British senate, as any Jockey at Newmarket. This is a very serious consideration, a consideration that demands the impartial attention of every elector of Great-Britain; and let us not exclaim continually against the extension of the royal prerogative, when the fault lays at our own door.

It has often been asserted as a very great grievance, that such a thriving place as Manchester should be unrepresented; but it ought to be remembered, that it is but a few years since Manchester has been so flourishing.

Singular was the case of Sir JOHN BARNARD, who in the year 1754, was returned member for the city of London, without treating, without bribing, and without canvassing! And it redounds much to the honour of Alderman PICKETT, who at the general election, in the year 1790, nobly resolved to open no house of entertainment, when he put up for representative for the city of London. Now I am upon the subject of parliamentary elections, I will, for the amusement of my readers, give an extract from the journal of a gentleman who

offered himself as a representative for the city of Bath, in the year 1646.

“ Thursday, Dec. 31.

“ Went to Bathe, Mr. ASHE preached, dined at the George-Inn, with the Maior and Bailiffs, and four Citizens, spent at dinner six shillings in wine.

“ Laid out in victuals at the	
“ George-Inn	£ 0 11 4
“ Laid out in drinking.....	0 7 2
“ Laid out in tobacco and drink-	
“ ing vefels.....	0 4 4
	—————
	£ 1 2 10
	—————

“ Note. I gave the city messengers two shillings, for bearing the Maiors letters to me, laid out in all £3 7s. for victuals, drink, and horse hire, together with divers gifts.”

Amidst the different forms of government which have been, or are still in vogue, the preference has always been given by judicious men to monarchy. Many and great are the inconveniences attending the Republican system;

stem ; for a full investigation of which, I refer my readers to Dr. ANDREWS's Treatise on Republics, a work well worthy of their perusal. It is the peculiar excellence of the British constitution, that although the executive power is lodged in one person ; yet, that the regal authority is limited, the royal prerogative is bounded ; and if inclined to be stretched beyond proper bounds, the other branches of the legislature will counteract, and say hitherto shalt thou go, and no further ; and here shall thy proud and arbitrary mandates be opposed.

When CHARLES I. that weak, that insincere prince, dared to trample upon the sacred liberties of the people, and infringe the laws of the constitution ; the nation took the alarm ; and the battle of Edge-Hill shewed that the British nation were never to be enslaved.

When JAMES II. followed the steps of his father, and endeavoured to introduce Popery and slavery, the British lion was roused, and the immortal WILLIAM, Prince of Orange, was invited to sit upon the throne of these kingdoms, in the room of the arbitrary JAMES. This is that illustrious prince whom Mr. PAINÉ dares to call detestable. Britons, can you

suffer your glorious deliverer to be thus calumniated? Not only is the august Prince of Orange, the subject of MR. PAINE's slander—but Oh! Shame! The amiable MARY, the lovely consort of the great NASSAU, is likewise the subject of his calumny. A princess so amiable, so pious, so attractive in every view, whether we view her in public or private life, that we may pronounce her good as the world has ever seen.

Indeed MR. PAINE has a most excellent talent at flandering his betters; like the madman he casts about firebrands, arrows, and death. Some of the illustrious characters of the present day, he bespatters with as much malice, as the wise and good who are now no more.

Our illustrious premier MR. PITT, is represented as a very weak and unskilful man, who is entirely unacquainted with the duties of his office. What a pity it is MR. PAINE is not made chancellor of the exchequer!!! PAINE's bickerings with MR. BURKE are truly laughable; they remind me of a sign which I have somewhere seen; it represents some dogs barking

barking at the moon, with the following inscription under it :

“ Since I am high and ye are low,
“ Ye growling curs, why bark ye so?”

Mr. PAINE may cavil at Mr. BURKE as long as he pleases, but, he may rest assured, that the brilliant lustre of Mr. BURKE's performance, will for ever glitter like a diamond of the richest quality; while his utopian reveries sink into contempt, and lie buried in obscurity.

I have remarked at the beginning of those observations, that Mr. PAINE had a great veneration for WAT TYLER, and in perusing the second part of his Treatise, I was very much amused by a note, which contains an elegant eulogium on WAT. A funeral oration in honour of the departed chief; upon reading this, it convinced me that the esteem he had for TYLER was very great.

“ I thought so once, but now I know it.”

Mr. PAINE, at the beginning of the second part of his Rights of Man, boasts that his performance is unanswerable. He acknowledges some have attempted to answer him; but who could

could be so fool-hardy as to think such attempts would succeed ; they could never expect that a second edition would be called for. Were a person to shew me a Treatise written in opposition to Mr. Paine's book ; and to ask me, Whether he should publish it ? my answer would be conveyed in language similar to this, My dear sir, do you know what you are about ! What are you insane ! I will endeavour to procure you an admission ticket for St. Luke's ! What, answer Paine ! Why, do you know sir, that man is ? He is a philosopher of philosophers ; he is wiser than PLATO ; possesses more penetration than ARISTOTLE ; he is as knowing as GALILEO ; as subtle as MALEBRANCHE ; as metaphysical as HUME ; and as acute as Lord MONBODDO. Pray sir, I beg and beseech you to desist from such a vain, such a fruitless attempt.

Having made these cursory Remarks on this unanswerable performance ; I now take my leave of my readers, entreating them to review these observations with candour, and to excuse the many defects they may discover. The language is such as was dictated by the spur of the occasion.

F I N I S.



